

Watershed Condition Assessment Program

WCA Program Breakout Session at
NPS Water Professionals' Meeting 2004
Fort Collins, Colorado

Breakout Session Objectives

- **Introduction to the Watershed Condition Assessment (WCA) Program**
- **Report on Work In-Progress**
 - **Compendium of WCA Methods, Web-based Decision Support Tool**
 - **Coastal/Marine Parks, Phase I Assessments**
- **Group Discussion – Making it Relevant and Useful to Parks**

A Watershed Assessment is:

“A process for analyzing a watershed’s current condition and the likely causes of these conditions.”

[The California Watershed Assessment Manual]

“The translation of scientific data into policy-relevant information that is suitable for supporting decision making and action at the watershed level.”

[Watershed Academy, U.S. EPA]

FOR MORE INFO...

“The California Watershed Assessment Manual” and companion assessment guide at <http://cwam.ucdavis.edu>

WCA Program Overview

- **Funded through the Natural Resource Challenge**
(\$3.1M increase to WRD base)
- **Will provide technical guidance for WCA's that are:**
 - **Tailored to park-specific information needs & resource management questions**
 - **Conducted over a range of geographic scales**
(localized sites → stream reaches → watersheds, landscapes)
 - **Executed at varying levels of scope, complexity, cost, and time commitment**
- **Will assist NPS field units as they work to:**
 - **Describe “Desired Conditions” for their natural resources**
 - **Identify and prioritize their resource restoration needs**

*What are the Desired Conditions? Are we there yet?
What resource conditions need improvement to get there?*